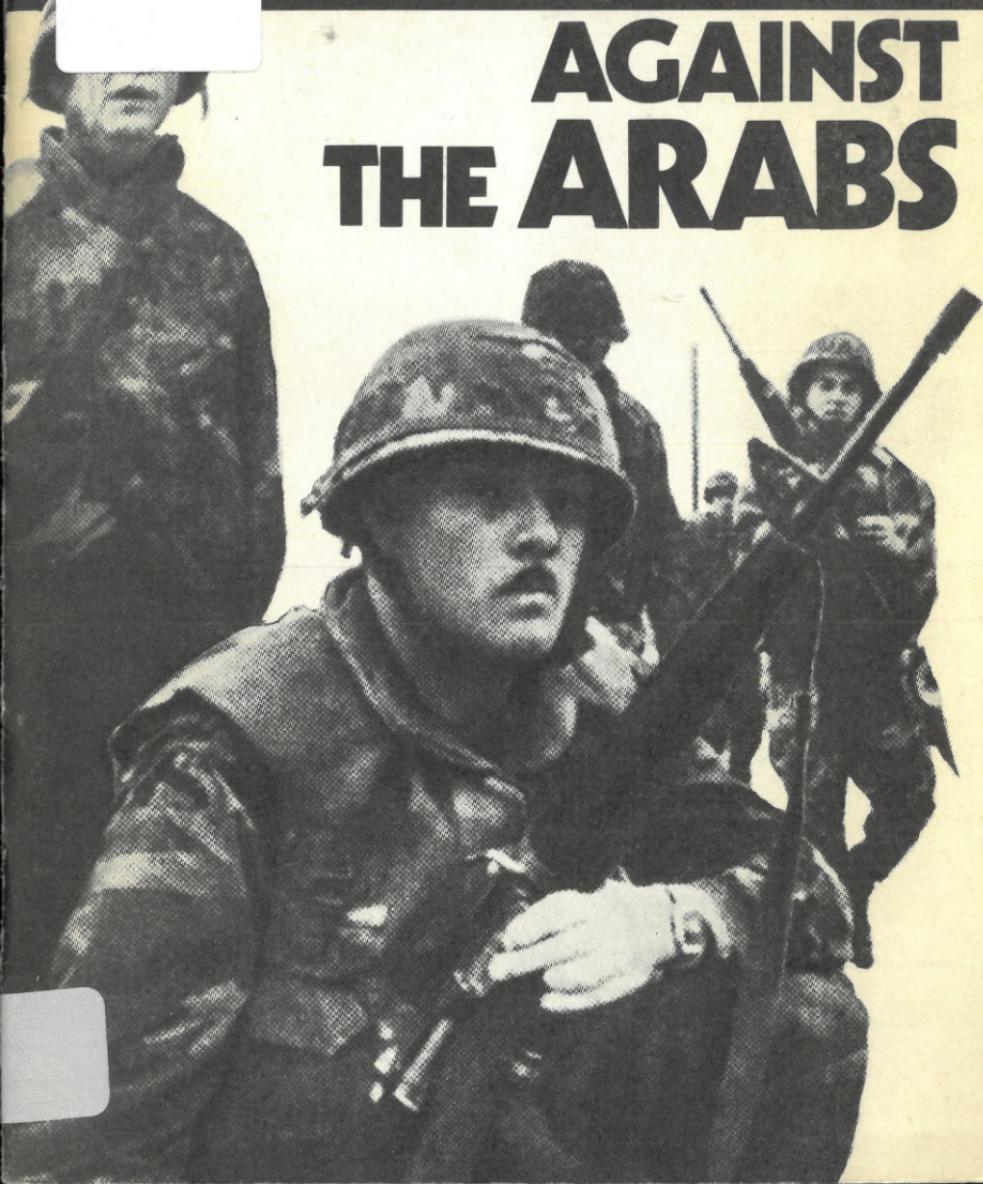
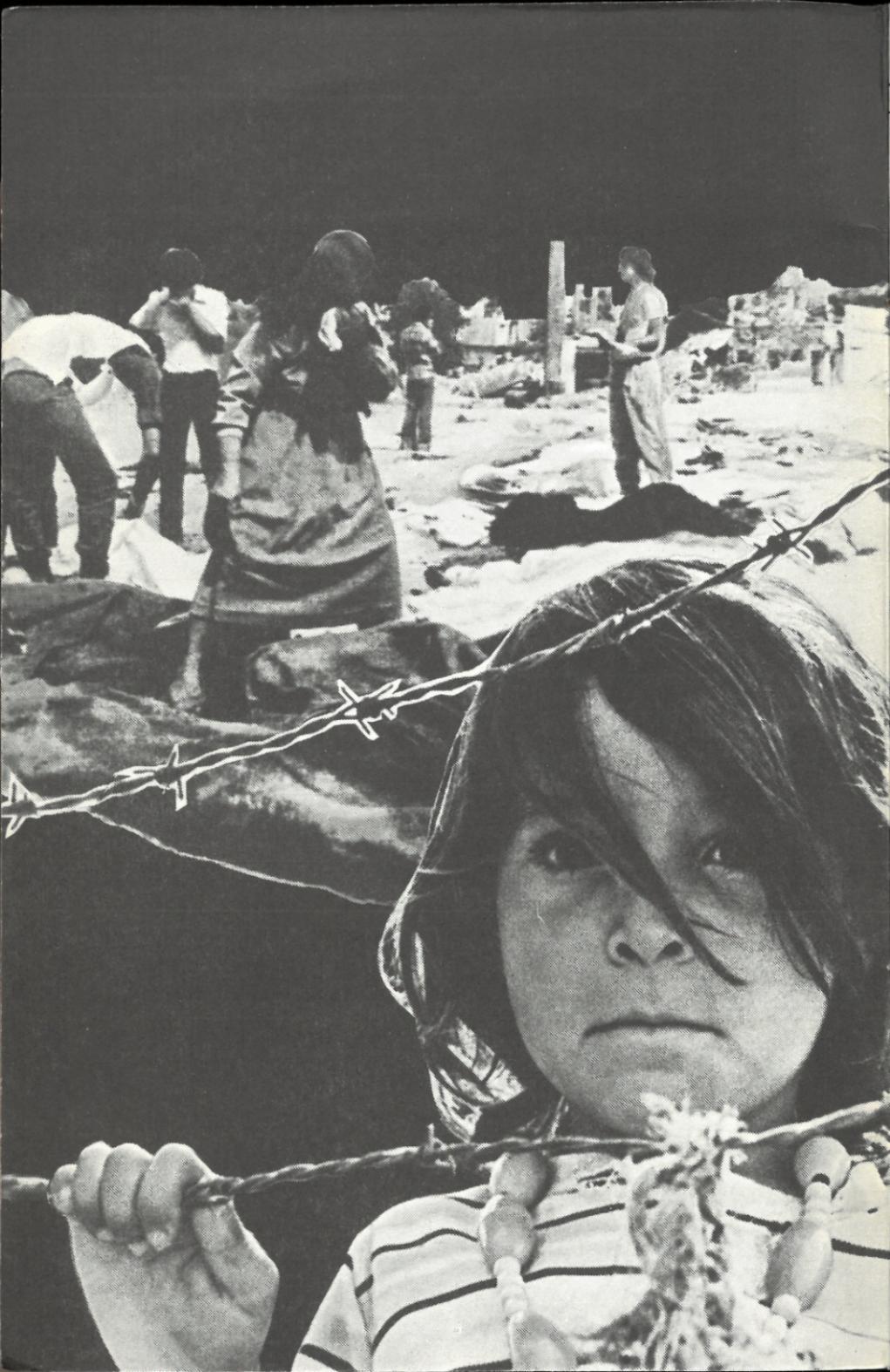


WASHINGTON AND TEL AVIV

AGAINST THE ARABS





Oleg FOMIN

**Washington
and Tel Aviv
Against the Arabs**

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The US Sixth Fleet Fires on the Arabs

On December 4, 1983, 28 US fighter bombers took off from the flight decks of the *Independence* and *John F. Kennedy*, carriers of the US Sixth Fleet, to attack the towns, cities and villages of Lebanon, and also the positions of the Syrian forces, which are part of the inter-Arab forces maintaining peace in the country. After the air raid on the positions of the Syrian military contingent the guns of the US Sixth Fleet, ground artillery, tanks and marines, in Lebanon under the auspices of what is called the "multinational force", opened heavy fire on the Druze areas in the Lebanon mountains and the suburbs of Beirut inhabited by Shiites. During this barbaric four-hour bombardment many civilians were killed. Houses, schools and hospitals were reduced to rubble. These were the Americans' "trophies" after displaying in a single day their entire military might: first combat aircraft, then ground and ship artillery.

This savage act of aggression marked the beginning of an operation to achieve the aim of highly secret Directive 111 issued by the US National Security Council and signed by President Reagan on October 29, 1983. The document provided for direct co-ordinated actions by US and Israeli armed forces to drive the Syrian contingent out of Lebanon and then to destroy the Lebanese National Patriotic Forces. The huge US Fleet off the shores of Lebanon, carrying 30,000 servicemen and 300 combat aircraft, is now kept constantly at maximum alert.

The scars of Beirut have not yet healed since the Israeli invasion in June 1982, and the Lebanese and Palestinians still mourn the dear ones they lost. This act of aggression was given whole-hearted military, political and economic support by the Reagan Administration. The invaders killed

or wounded some 70,000 Lebanese and Palestinians. By destroying many towns and villages in South Lebanon and all of West Beirut they left about a million people homeless. For a year and a half the Zionist invaders have been conducting a policy of murder, plunder and destruction on Lebanese soil. Instead of demanding that its junior partner should withdraw from the country and thus end the occupation, the USA has supported this policy with its ships and marines. US criminals have joined the Israeli criminals on the long-suffering soil of Lebanon. This has ushered in a new and dangerous stage in direct US aggression against sovereign Lebanon.

The whole world is outraged by US international terrorism raised to the level of state policy. To stem the tide of universal indignation, President Reagan, Defense Secretary Weinberger and other US officials tried to justify the massive air raid of December 4 by claiming that it was undertaken in retaliation for Syrian attempts to shoot down US reconnaissance aircraft. Nobody believed this story. Besides, nobody had given the Americans the right to conduct reconnaissance flights over Syrian positions in the first place (with subsequent transfer of information to the Israeli invaders). Secondly, it is practically impossible to distinguish an F-14 flying a reconnaissance mission from one on a combat mission. Thirdly, US "reconnaissance flights" over the positions of the Lebanese National Patriotic Forces and the Syrian contingent were definitely provocative, designed to spark off a direct military clash between the US forces and Syrian units. Commenting on Syria's decision to open fire on US reconnaissance planes, Faruq As-Shar, Syria's Acting Minister of Information and Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, quite rightly remarked that Syria was doing no more than US warships would have done had Syrian aircraft appeared over them. Addressing the Americans, Faruq As-Shar said:

"You have not given us the right to fly over the ships of the Sixth Fleet. You are therefore not treating us as equals. You want us to grant you rights you refuse us."

The Syrian troops and Lebanese patriots bravely beat off the aggressive attacks of the Americans. Syrian anti-aircraft gunners shot down two US planes. One of the pilots was taken prisoner. In a skirmish between a detachment of the National Patriotic Forces and the US marines near the Beirut international airport eight Americans were

killed. But this did not stop Ronald Reagan. He made threats about "retaliatory attacks" on the Syrian forces and the Lebanese National Patriotic Forces. The US President has thus denied his own claim that the USA did not want to get involved in the fighting in Lebanon and that its military presence was intended to help stabilise the situation in the country.

December 14 marked the beginning of a new stage in US efforts to "stabilise" the situation in Lebanon. The deafening thunder of the guns of the US battleship *New Jersey* (which made its last appearance in the Vietnam war in 1968) caused the people of Beirut to think that the sky overhead was caving in. The ship was firing two types of shells from its 16-inch guns at the Syrians—1,300 kg and 870 kg (the latter approximately equal in weight to a Volkswagen car). Even the lighter shell forms a crater 60 metres in diameter. The next day the *New Jersey* shelled the Druze positions near Beirut. The battleship had been ordered a fortnight before to use its 16-inch guns against the Syrians, but it had not opened fire because of its unsuitable position. In both cases the decision to open fire was taken by the command of the US contingent in Lebanon, not by Washington. The Pentagon had granted the US command the right to adopt such decisions.

The roar of the *New Jersey*'s guns announced the USA's complete involvement in land, air and sea operations in Lebanon. The US marines of the "multinational force" began to exchange fire every day with the Lebanese National Patriotic Forces located in the southern suburbs of Beirut. Combat aircraft from the *Independence* and *John F. Kennedy* flew every day over the Lebanon mountains and attacked the positions of the Syrian forces. The cruisers and destroyers of the US Sixth Fleet regularly bombarded the hills near Beirut. By involving the *New Jersey* Washington demonstrated its determination to turn Lebanon into a military and political base from which to realise its hegemonist schemes and help the Israelis accomplish their expansionist plans in the Middle East.

That the US aggressors plan to stay in Lebanon and to fight the Arab forces opposing Israeli aggression and US diktat is obvious from the decision, already announced by Washington, to replace the *New Jersey* by a similar battleship. The battleship *Iowa*, in the reserve at present, will thus be sent to the shores of Lebanon. The Arabs will come

under fire from the world's biggest guns. The ship's artillery is currently being fitted with the latest computerised fire control system.

The continuing Israeli occupation and the presence of the US and other NATO interventionist forces in Lebanon constitute the main destabilising factor in the country and the region as a whole. Once the US forces had directly confronted the Syrian troops and Lebanese National Patriotic Forces, the Reagan Administration had discarded its mask of "unbiased mediator" in the Middle Eastern crisis. The purpose of Washington's armed intervention in Lebanon is to prevent a national dialogue there, to fan civil war and to participate in it directly on the side of the collaborationists. By resorting to pirate-like action on Lebanese soil Washington has flagrantly disregarded all the standards of international law and arrogantly challenged the international community, the UN Security Council and the Resolutions it adopted on the restoration of Lebanon's independence and the ending of the Israeli occupation. The escalation of US and Israeli aggression against Lebanon has further dangerously aggravated the situation in the region. This is the direct outcome of the Reagan-Shamir talks in Washington last November and the first steps undertaken under the US-Israeli accords on the further expansion of "strategic co-operation" between the two countries.

The Star of David on the Stars and Stripes

On November 28, 1983, Yitzhak Shamir, the Israeli Prime Minister, opened his visit to the USA by laying a wreath in Arlington National Cemetery in Washington on the tomb of the 269 US marines who were victims of US aggressive policy in Lebanon. He then went to the White House for a private talk with Ronald Reagan in the famous Oval Room where many earlier decisions had been taken which brought misery and suffering to the Arab peoples.

The Israeli-US talks lasted two days. They ended in the signing of an agreement on "new strategic relations" between the two countries, which amounts to the creation

of an aggressive Washington-Tel Aviv axis. The Reagan Administration elevated US-Israeli relations to an unprecedentedly high level. A joint military-political committee is being set up to deal with matters bearing on joint military planning, the conduct of military manoeuvres, the early deployment of US weapons, military equipment and other materiel in Israel and the exchange of intelligence data. The committee will in effect act as a co-ordinating centre for joint aggressive operations in the Middle East. Under the terms of the Washington accords the USA's political, economic and military capabilities have been placed at the service of Israeli expansionism. In the current 1984 fiscal year Tel Aviv will be given a series of military loans to a total of 1,700 million dollars. Half of this sum, 850 million to be exact, is to be granted gratis. In the following, 1985 fiscal year the Reagan Administration has agreed to give Israel military aid to the sum of 1,400 million dollars. Although this sum is smaller than that for 1984, it will be wholly gratuitous and will not increase Israel's foreign debt. Radio Israel said that this was the first time that an American President had undertaken a firm commitment in writing on future military aid to Israel. This commitment covers aid to be rendered over a period of several years starting from 1986. President Reagan personally promised Yitzhak Shamir that military aid would be used to develop Lavi aircraft in the USA, to purchase components for the Lavi planes from Israel and to grant the Israeli manufacturers the right to participate in the production of US weapons systems.

The United States agreed to renew deliveries to Tel Aviv of cluster bombs and projectiles, banned by international conventions on weapons of mass destruction. The Israeli military made wide use of such bombs and shells against the civilian Arab population, causing wide protest on the part of the world public.

The Israeli rulers reciprocated by giving the Pentagon the right to use Israel's territory and sea ports. This part of the agreement is already being put into effect. In December the *Trenton*, a large US landing ship, arrived at the Israeli port of Haifa for refitting. In addition to carrying heavy equipment and weapons, the *Trenton* is capable of receiving helicopters on a special deck. Only recently the ship helped land the US marines in Lebanon. The *Jerusalem Post* writes that the *Trenton* will be the first fighting ship of

the US Sixth Fleet to be refitted in the docks at Haifa. In the past the port was regarded as an "unofficial base" for US ships; now it has acquired official status.

Yitzhak Shamir and Moshe Arens, the Israeli Minister of Defence who accompanied him, were pleased with the results of their visit. When their plane landed at Ben Gurion Airport upon their return from the USA Moshe Arens said that the talks he and Shamir had had in Washington marked a "turning point" in Israel's relations with the Americans. He even threatened that close co-ordination between Israel and the United States did not bode any good for Syria.

Yitzhak Shamir was even more outspoken. He said bluntly that such co-ordination might take the form of joint military action. Commenting on the results of his trip, the Israeli Prime Minister made it clear that his delegation had signed a number of agreements with the USA, which would later be supplemented by other agreements on the recommendations of the joint military-political committee. He was sure that US aid to Israel would far exceed the initial expectations of the Israeli leaders. As a result of the Washington talks Israel became in effect a NATO member-nation enjoying privileged treatment from the Pentagon.

In Washington Israel was awarded a bonus, as it were, for its aggressive policies, for the crimes it had perpetrated on Lebanese soil and for the massacres in Sabra and Shatila. There is nothing surprising in this. Israel's barbaric invasion of Lebanon in June 1982 was a direct result of the unlimited support the Reagan Administration gave to the Israeli expansionists. The fifth Israeli-Arab war began on a signal from the White House. Washington had provided the material backing and equipment for it. In Lebanon Israel fought with American weapons and American money. The Report of the Central Committee of the Israeli Communist Party to its 27th Congress stressed that had it not been for US financial, military and political aid the Israeli ruling circles would have been unable to pursue their position-of-strength policies.

Israel's nationalistic arrogance arises not so much from its strength, which is ultimately dependent and limited, as from the might of US imperialism and its support. It is absolutely clear that a country with three million people can afford the luxury of waging a protracted modern war

in alien territory only if it is fully backed by the economic and financial capabilities of one of the biggest imperialist powers.

In condemning the bloody gamble of the Israeli invaders in Lebanon, George Ball, ex-Under-Secretary of State, said that it was materially based on vast US aid—2,500 million dollars a year, or seven million a day. Out of this sum of annual grants 1,500 million went on purchases of US weapons and other military equipment. Just before it launched its aggressive attack on Lebanon, Israel received large quantities of modern American aircraft, helicopters, Sidewinder guided missiles, heavy tanks and armoured personnel carriers, 155 mm and 177 mm guns and various types of missiles. Israel got thousands of tons of lethal cargoes in the form of bombs and projectiles, including cluster, phosphorus and chemical bombs.

While Israel was waging its aggressive war against Lebanon, ex-Senator James Abourezk uttered a phrase which gained wide circulation. He said that in practical terms the American government had given Israel license to murder. President Reagan, however, differed in his opinion on the courageous Palestinians fighting for the restoration of the lawful rights of their people. Using Zionist terminology, he said that the “plague of terrorism” in the Middle East must be wiped out.

In addition to military aid, the US Administration gave the aggressor complete political and diplomatic support. The US Representative on the UN Security Council twice used the right of veto, on June 8 and 26, to give Israel enough time to seize more than one third of Lebanon's territory. In the UN General Assembly the United States defended Israel's occupation of Lebanon against 127 countries which condemned Israel. Philip Habib, Washington's special envoy to the Middle East, used political methods to achieve the same ends as General Ariel Sharon with the help of military methods. Their aim was to eliminate the Palestine Liberation Organisation both militarily and politically, to turn Lebanon into a US-Israeli protectorate by including it in the Camp David deal and to use Lebanon's territory for a subsequent attack on Syria. Washington resorted to delaying tactics to enable the invaders to consolidate their positions on Lebanese soil and to perpetrate the bloody massacre of the Palestinians in Sabra and Shatila. Washington's position towards

Israel's aggression caused Farouk Kaddoumi, member of the PLO Executive, to say: "Reagan, you are the butcher of the Palestinian people."

Like previous US-Israeli agreements, the agreement on "new strategic relations" concluded in Washington is not confined to military co-operation alone. At the talks Reagan and Shamir voiced their intention firmly to pursue a single policy in the Middle East. They agreed to continue the anti-Arab Camp David process, to force on the Palestinians "administrative autonomy" which they had rejected because it deprived them of the lawful right to an independent state of their own.

Lavishing generous grants on its strategic ally, the United States has not made its aid conditional on any Israeli concessions to the Arabs. Washington has thus not demanded that Tel Aviv abandon the practice of creating militarised Jewish settlements in occupied Palestinian territories—on the West Bank of the River Jordan and in the Gaza Strip. When the BBC Panorama programme asked US Secretary of State George Schultz to give explanations, the latter made it clear that talks on the interim and final status of the West Bank would be possible only if King Hussein of Jordan and some acceptable Palestinian delegation (in other words, a delegation of Palestinian Quislings) would be prepared to join in the Camp David process. Is this not a pro-Israeli stand?

Defying the views of the Lebanese people and the Arab countries, and the decisions of the Geneva conference on national reconciliation in Lebanon, the US and Israeli leaders showed that they were determined to put the Lebanese-Israeli agreement of May 17, 1983, into effect with the help of direct military pressure. It is a fact that the Lebanese-Israeli agreement was forced upon the Lebanese government. It draws Lebanon into the Camp David collusion on terms which are even more humiliating than those Anwar Sadat had agreed to. Thus, as distinguished from the Egyptian-Israeli treaty, the Lebanese-Israeli agreement actually consolidates Israel's military presence in Lebanese territory. Signed under direct pressure from the Reagan Administration, the Lebanese-Israeli agreement places obligations and restrictions on the victim of aggression, not on the aggressor.

Israel's arrogant demands which violate Lebanon's sovereignty and will lead to its dismemberment form the

basis of the said agreement. Under the terms of this document Lebanon's southern regions will actually be withdrawn from the control of the Lebanese government. The terms will also rigidly restrict the composition and armament of the Lebanese Army, movement of military and civilian personnel, and passage of civilian aircraft. The agreement enables Israel to continue its economic plunder of Lebanon's southern regions, which the aggressors began as soon as they set foot on Lebanese soil. In contrast to the Egyptian-Israeli treaty which imposes slight military restrictions on Israel, the Lebanese-Israeli agreement does not provide for any such limitations on Israel. It only refers in general terms to inspection by a security commission of "frontier security measures" on the Israeli side of the frontier. The document completely ignores the question of the criminal responsibility of the Israeli aggressors and their accomplices for the war and the civil crimes they perpetrated during their invasion and occupation of Lebanon. Nor does it mention any compensation for the tremendous material damage the invaders inflicted on Lebanon and its citizens.

This agreement gravely endangers the security of Syria, Lebanon's neighbour. Under its terms, upon withdrawal of the main Israeli military contingents from Lebanon, Israel retains its right of military control over Lebanon's air space, territory and territorial waters near the Syrian border. If this agreement were put into effect, this right and other "rights" laid down in its secret clauses and in a special US-Israeli document would constitute a standing threat to Syria. It was thus reported in the press that a secret US-Israeli document, signed at the same time as the said agreement, permits Tel Aviv to enter Lebanese territory across its northern border. This means that Israel can obtain access to the Lebanese-Syrian border at any time it believes that the conditions "ensuring" Israel's security have been "violated" as a result of the withdrawal of its forces. The Syrian leaders justly refuse to recognise the Lebanese-Israeli agreement for reasons of their country's security and for political reasons. The Syrians maintain that this agreement is more dangerous for the Arabs and their freedom than the Camp David deal.

When Yitzhak Shamir was interviewed on television by ABC, he was asked whether he believed that President Amin Gemayel of Lebanon would achieve success at the

Lebanese conference on national reconciliation if no changes were made in the agreement signed on May 17. The Israeli Prime Minister replied curtly that agreements were not signed to be altered or rescinded. This particular agreement, he said, had been signed after protracted talks between the Israelis and the Lebanese with the participation of the Americans. Therefore, he said, he saw no reason why any changes should be introduced into the agreement.

Shamir knew what he was talking about. He quoted words from a speech Reagan made on November 29 upon completion of the talks in Washington. The US President said that no effort should be spared to expedite the realisation of the agreement between Israel and Lebanon signed on May 17.

The US President said nothing at all about insuring the security of the Arabs who are the victims of Israeli aggression. He is quite indifferent to the fate of the Arabs. More indifferent than any of his predecessors at the White House, starting with Harry S. Truman who supported Israel's first expansionist steps in 1948. Today Reagan has given the "green light" to Shamir and Arens to launch new acts of aggression against the Arab countries. He has guaranteed them US air and naval support. The US Air Force and Navy have already gone into action in Beirut, although this has not brought them any military glory. This has, however, brought fame to Ronald Reagan as the most pro-Israeli US President.

Several years ago, Alfred M. Lilienthal, a well-known American journalist, wrote an open letter to Jimmy Carter in which he pointed out that, although Israel had not yet become the 51st state, Uncle Sam from 1948 had showered on it 32,000 million dollars in the form of economic and military aid, and also in the form of tax-free philanthropic donations. This was more than any of the 50 American states had received over the same period.

After the Reagan-Shamir talks it would be quite appropriate to add the six-pointed Star of David to the 50 stars on the US flag.

On January 4, 1984, Israel perpetrated the most heinous atrocity since it invaded Lebanon in June 1982. Sixteen Israeli air pirates precipitated a hail of bombs on Baalbek and El-Jalil, a nearby Palestinian refugee camp. As a result of this barbaric raid over 100 people were killed and more

than 400 were wounded. Among the dead were many children. Dozens of homes, the city mosque and two schools were destroyed. This aggressive act was carried out with the full support and encouragement of the USA. It is a result of the new Washington-Tel Aviv strategic accords.

In the Lobby of “Strategic Co-operation”

Nearly a year and a half before his inauguration Ronald Reagan contributed an article to the *Washington Post* in which he laid out his view of American priorities in the Middle East. The future president wrote that the collapse of the shah's regime in Iran had enhanced the role of Israel as the only strategic bastion in the Middle East on which the United States could really rely. In his typically presumptuous manner Reagan outspokenly described the role he thought some of the Arab countries should play to further US strategy in the Middle East. He meant those Arab countries whose leaders still cherished illusions about the USA and hoped that one day Washington would begin to see clearly again, abandon its Zionist sympathies and come to rely on them. He did not, however, rule out the use of “pro-Western states” in the interests of US hegemonism in that region. In particular, he mentioned Saudi Arabia and other Arab states in the Persian Gulf area. At the same time he pointed to their weakness, vulnerability and dependence on the West.

While giving the conservative Arab regimes no hope of privileged relations with the USA, Reagan wrote that certain Arab states, such as Egypt, could also, at one stage or another, move to the fore in defending Western interests. The future master of the White House believed that the more such states the better, but he also made it clear that the USA would maintain only relations of secondary importance with them. Reagan expressed his firm conviction that no Arab country could replace Israel in the Middle East strategy of the United States.

In the main point he made Reagan is not original. In advancing their imperialist policies in the Middle East all US Presidents, from Truman on, relied on Tel Aviv. As long as the Zionists are in power, Israel was, is and will be

the USA's most privileged ally in the region. US imperialism and world Zionism have a common nature and share common goals. Israeli Zionists are the strike force of US imperialism which is eager to plunder, in neocolonialist style, the national wealth of the Arab countries and to establish its military and political domination in the Arab East. Tel Aviv sees the USA as a steady source for building up Israel's military potential and as the supporter of Zionist expansion in the Middle East.

By concluding an official military-political alliance with Israel Reagan has gone farther than his predecessors in cementing ties with that country. More than any other US President he has shown disregard for the Arab countries, including the so-called moderate states. Reagan was the author of the idea of creating in the Middle East an anti-Soviet strategic pact—an alliance of Israel with "pro-Western", as he put it, Arab regimes under US leadership. Close US-Israeli military and political co-operation is to be the pivot of this alliance, Arab countries playing the role of the blind tools of US imperialism and Israeli Zionism. The drawing of moderate Arab countries into the suicidal strategic pact would mean putting them into the same harness with Israel and involving them in the Camp David deal. This deal has already been exposed and rejected by the Arab and Muslim worlds, the Non-Aligned Movement and all peace-loving states and forces in the world.

The US Administration has frankly stated that the USA should promote relations with moderate Arab countries for the sake of Israel's long-term interests. Washington is guided by these interests when it supplies Arabs with US weapons. These arms are invariably inferior to those received by Israel. A case in point was the sale to Saudi Arabia of five AWACS (airborne warning and control system) planes, and also of refuelling planes and equipment to increase the range and fire power of the 62 F-15 fighters, all of which had cost 8,500 million dollars. To mislead Arab public opinion the US media used the contract as a "script" for a propaganda show. They depicted the transaction as Reagan's victory over the Zionist lobby in Washington and played up his image of "friend of the Arabs". What did this "arms deal of the century" actually add up to? It assured the USA military as well as political and financial advantages because it would help to build up Pentagon-controlled stockpiles of US weapons in this

region. Further, Washington decided not to install on the AWACS planes (to be delivered to Al-Riyadh only in 1985) the key systems which standard US Air Force planes carry. The Pentagon reassured Israel's many friends in US Congress that Saudi Arabia would receive only incomplete AWACS systems. A US Defense Department document states that, if necessary, the Israeli Air Force will have no trouble shooting down the planes sold to Saudi Arabia.

Let us now recall how the late Egyptian President Anwar Sadat bowed down to the White House. Although he actually put his country at the service of US imperialism and Israeli Zionism, Washington refused him the favours he had counted on in the political, economic and military spheres. After Sadat visited Washington in September 1981 Anis Mansur, Editor-in-Chief of the official Egyptian journal *October*, who had accompanied him, bitterly remarked that, while America gave to Egypt with one hand, it gave to Israel with two. Washington not only cheated Sadat of his share of aid. By pushing Sadat into the arms of Tel Aviv it actually caused his death.

Reagan and his team have displayed utter contempt for the problems of Arab countries, even of those which they call "America's friends". This was manifest during the official visit to Washington of the Lebanese President Amin Gemayel who arrived immediately after Shamir. The US side had, in fact, started humiliating Lebanon before the President's arrival. The White House deliberately postponed the visit for nearly two months. Despite Amin Gemayel's request, Shamir had the honour of being received first.

At the Geneva conference on national reconciliation in Lebanon President Gemayel actually agreed that the Lebanese-Israeli agreement of May 17, 1983, was unviable and it could neither ensure the country's security nor help resolve its problems. One of the decisions the conference adopted after the first round of talks in Geneva urged the President of the Lebanese Republic to establish the necessary international contacts to end Israeli occupation and to guarantee absolute and complete authority over the country's entire territory and in all the national regions. It was precisely in this context that President Gemayel's visit to Washington was to have taken place. The Lebanese President had been authorised by virtually all the main

political forces of Lebanon, including the National Patriotic Forces, to conduct talks along these lines.

Like Shamir, the Lebanese President began his official visit by laying a wreath at the graveside of US marines. But Washington gave him neither multimillion dollar subsidies, nor assurances of unlimited support. The world press noted that whereas Shamir's visit had been crowned with success, Gemayel's visit ended in complete failure. The White House rewarded the Israeli Prime Minister with the most generous gifts in the history of US-Israeli relations. The President of Lebanon left Washington virtually empty-handed. He had not won a single concession. President Reagan firmly stuck to the promise he had given Shamir of avoiding discussing any changes in the clauses of the May 17 agreement, let alone the possibility of rescinding it. The entire course of the talks showed that the US Administration wished further to complicate the situation in Lebanon and to use the country as an instrument in its sinister intrigues against Syria, the Palestine Liberation Organisation and all the patriotic forces of the Arab East. Earlier, with US support, Israel had gone so far as to demand that the Lebanese government should start guerrilla operations against the Syrians in the areas they controlled. In Washington Reagan urged President Gemayel to help him in the struggle against Damascus either by withdrawing a part of the National Salvation Front from its alliance with Syria or by getting the Lebanese army and police directly to participate in Israel's punitive operations against the Lebanese patriots waging a guerrilla war against the invaders. President Gemayel's supporters made the following statement to reporters of *Jeune Afrique*:

"Washington has demanded that we give direct or indirect support to Israel. But such a step would make a national dialogue between the Lebanese impossible and would totally compromise the regime in the eyes of the majority of the Lebanese population."

The American papers called things by their proper names. John M. Goshko frankly wrote in the *Washington Post* that when Elie Salem, the Lebanese Foreign Minister, said that the Lebanese delegation returned home with greater confidence than ever, he was trying to put a good face on the matter. The prominent US journalist claimed that the talks between the Reagan Administration and the

Lebanese President had ended in the notification of the latter that the USA did not intend to exert pressure on Israel to get it to withdraw its troops from Lebanon. Another well-known US journalist, Bernard Gwertzman, wrote in the *New York Times* that the US Administration put it bluntly to President Gemayel that it had no "magic wand" to help withdraw foreign troops from Lebanon. The Americans recommended that the Lebanese President enter into direct co-operation with Israel. This abrupt treatment of the so-called moderate Arab countries is becoming regular practice on the part of the Reagan Administration. You cannot help noticing the cynical, outspoken manner in which Washington displays its "special relations" with Tel Aviv. US imperialists have moved from flirting with the Arabs to the blunt language of force and to attempts to strangle the Arab peoples. When the US-Lebanese talks were over, an ABC diplomatic correspondent remarked that, in keeping with its new approach, Washington believed that it was easier to deal both with radical and moderate Arab states if it maintained strong relations with Israel and made this known to the Arabs.

Addressing the European Parliament on December 15, 1983, King Hussein of Jordan voiced grave concern on behalf of the moderate Arab countries at the new US-Israeli accords on strategic co-operation. He sharply criticised the USA's policy in the Middle East for its patently pro-Israeli character. Neither this nor any other similar statements embarrassed Washington. The US Administration knew in advance that the moderate Arab countries would condemn the US-Israeli military-political alliance. Perhaps Reagan's re-election considerations had something to do with this, since he is anxious to secure the support of the American Jews.

It is a fact that the new US-Israeli agreement leaves the moderate Arab countries no hope of priority in their relations with Washington. The White House openly shows its disregard for the views and reactions of Amman, Al-Riyadh, Kuwait, Tunis, Doha and Abu Dhabi. It believes that ultimately they will accept any step Washington makes, because they have no choice. When dealing with the Arab forces that resolutely oppose imperialism and Zionism, the Reagan Administration resorts to blackmail, threatening them with the use of joint US-

Israeli force. An American commentator pointed out that countries such as Syria should clearly understand that in the context of the new US-Israeli relations it might "get into trouble". Reagan had shown that he meant business by embarking with Israel on direct military confrontation with Syrian formations and the National Patriotic Forces in Lebanon. The US Administration would not, of course, have dared to have recourse to threats or direct military action against the Arabs had it not been sure that the moderate Arab states would react passively.

According to the American press, a high-standing spokesman of the Washington Administration expressed the plain view that the elevation of US-Israeli relations to a higher level should persuade the pro-Western Arab countries to show a more realistic and co-operative approach towards American policy in the region. When US Secretary of State Schultz visited several moderate Arab countries in December 1983, he noted a sharply negative reaction to the further strengthening of US ties with Israel. Despite this, he said that there would be no change in US policy. In an attempt to combine the incompatible, he tried to convince the Arab leaders that, while the USA was furthering its already "excellent relations" with Israel, it was not averse to maintaining "good relations" with the Arab countries. The head of the US State Department thus reaffirmed that the Arab regimes currying favour with Washington would play the humiliating role of suppliants in the lobby of US-Israeli "strategic co-operation."

The World Condemns the US-Israeli Alliance

The majority of countries and broad sections of the world public have condemned the US-Israeli alliance, the international terrorism which Washington and Tel Aviv have elevated to the level of state policy and US aggression against Lebanon. People of various faiths and political convictions all over the planet are joining in the movement of protest against the pirate-like policies of Washington and Tel Aviv in the Middle East.

Progressive Arab regimes and national-patriotic forces in the vanguard of the struggle against imperialism and

Zionism have branded Washington's official military alliance with Tel Aviv as a grave threat not only to the Arabs, but also to world peace. They have pointed out that US-Israeli "strategic co-operation" is the logical outcome of mounting US and Israeli aggressiveness, a practical embodiment of their policy of establishing hegemony and suppressing the national liberation movement both in the Middle East and all over the world. The progressive Arab countries and parties have issued a warning to the effect that, once they have joined hands, US imperialism and Zionism will intrigue and commit acts of aggression not only against anti-imperialist regimes. Proceeding from the theory of racial superiority, Washington and Tel Aviv are making attempts on the national sovereignty and natural resources of all Arab countries, including the moderate ones.

It should be mentioned that the Arab monarchies and emirates are becoming increasingly aware that the Washington-Tel Aviv axis is spearheaded not only against Syria, the Lebanese National Patriotic Forces and the Palestine Liberation Organisation, but also against the whole of the Arab world. The USA's pirate-like behaviour in Lebanon has opened the eyes even of pro-Western Arabs to the fact that Israel and the USA with their criminal alliance are the main enemy of the Arab peoples. The leaders and media of the Arab states which the US Administration hypocritically refers to as its "friends" have severely criticised the White House. For instance, Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kuwait, condemned the US air raids on Syrian positions in Lebanon and sharply attacked the new US-Israeli accords on "strategic co-operation". The *Arrayah* newspaper published in Qatar commented that Washington was the cause of the upheavals the Arab world was living through. The USA was using armed force, said the paper, rendering all-out aid to Israel and urging it to commit acts of aggression and wholesale murder to impose on the Arabs an order that Washington considers best for its interests. Those who were attempting to resolve the Palestinian question in the interests of Israel had ordered the battleship *New Jersey* to sow death and destruction on Lebanese soil.

The US press has anxiously registered a rise in anti-American sentiment in the Arab East. It has pointed out

that even the USA's "closest friends" in the region, namely Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia and Morocco, have expressed their disapproval of the recent US-Israeli agreement. US observers have remarked that the efforts of the State Department to play down the role of the new US-Israeli strategic agreement have failed to dispel anxiety among the moderate Arab states.

Late last year the 14th foreign ministers' meeting of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference was held at Dacca, Bangladesh. This large inter-governmental organisation unites 43 countries and the PLO. It unanimously condemned the US-Israeli deal. Habib Chatti, Secretary-General of the Organisation, referred to the deal as "shameless support for the Zionists", designed to encourage and further their policy of aggression and expansion.

On December 5, 1983, after the US forces had attacked the Syrian positions in Lebanon, the World Peace Council issued a Statement urging the immediate cessation of US aggression and the unconditional withdrawal from all Arab territories of US and Israeli troops, and also of the French, British and Italian contingents stationed there under the guise of the "multinational force".

It is worth noting that there is disagreement among the NATO member countries which have sent their soldiers to Lebanon. While the French Minister of Defence said that his country had no intention of withdrawing its forces from Lebanon and his British counterpart stated that his country would not even consider withdrawing its troops, the Italian President proposed that all Italian troops which are part of the "multinational force" return home by late December. After his trip to Lebanon Alessandro Pertini frankly declared that the Americans were there not to maintain peace, but to defend Israel.

The international community has censured the hegemonist and expansionist ambitions of Washington and Tel Aviv. In a resolution on the Middle East adopted in December 1983, the 38th Session of the UN General Assembly pointed out that Israel's behaviour, policies and actions showed it quite definitely to be a non-peaceful state which had failed to live up to its commitments under the UN Charter. The Resolution expressed disapproval of one of the permanent members of the UN Security Council for its political, economic, financial, military and technical

support to Israel. It said that this support encouraged Tel Aviv to acts of aggression and to perpetuating the occupation and annexation of seized Arab territories.

On December 19, the last day of the 38th Session of the UN General Assembly, the United States was again put in the pillory. Despite fierce US opposition, the international community passed a special resolution condemning the US-Israeli strategic alliance. The General Assembly voiced the opinion that this alliance was intended to create an immediate threat to the inalienable right of all peoples in the region to independence and sovereignty over their territories and natural resources. The Assembly made it clear that the purpose of this deal was to put an end to the lawful struggle of the Palestinian people for the restoration of their inalienable rights in their homeland and to create an additional threat to world peace and security. This most representative of international forums condemned the recent co-ordinated US-Israeli aggression in the region as the outcome of this strategic alliance. The General Assembly decided to include in the provisional agenda for its 39th Session an item on the negative consequences of the US-Israeli strategic alliance. The Arab, socialist and the main non-aligned states, as well as two NATO members—Greece and Turkey—voted in favour of the resolution. It is worth noting that only the Western countries and several dictatorial Latin American regimes, such as Chile and Paraguay, voted against it.

These important and positive UN decisions are a serious warning to the US-Israeli aggressors who are now hatching plans to expand their armed intervention in the affairs of Arab states, plans that endanger the security of the peoples not only in the Middle East, but all over the world.

The Soviet Position

The Soviet Union has repeatedly declared its solidarity with the Syrian, Lebanese, Palestinian and other Arab peoples who are defending their independence and are resisting US and Israeli attempts to force on them a settlement of the Middle East situation on enslaving terms. It has rendered and will continue to render all-round assistance to those fighting aggression in the Middle East.

On December 15 last year Andrei Gromyko, Member of the Politbureau of the CPSU Central Committee, First Deputy Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers and Minister of Foreign Affairs, received Arthur Hartman, US Ambassador in Moscow, and discussed the situation in the Middle East. Andrei Gromyko emphasised that the dangerous development of the situation was caused by US and Israeli armed and other intervention in the affairs of Lebanon, and the policy of threat and pressure towards Syria. He expressed strong disapproval of Washington's actions to heighten tension in the region, in particular the military actions against Lebanon and the inter-Arab forces stationed there on lawful grounds.

The Soviet Union sees US interventionist actions in Lebanon as part of the general aggressive, militaristic course of the present Washington Administration which is conducting a policy of international terrorism and subversive operations all over the world. It should be noted that deployment of first-strike nuclear missiles in Western Europe near the borders of the USSR and its allies has, among others, the aim of threatening the Arab countries from Europe. Pershing-2s have a range of 2,500 kilometres and can be aimed in the direction of the Mediterranean. This is a real danger. It is no accident that US strategists have been persistently harping on US "vital interests" in the Middle East. In his Statement dated November 24, 1983, Yuri Andropov, General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, Chairman of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet, gave an assessment of the international situation in view of the US deployment of nuclear missiles in Western Europe. The Statement expresses the resolve of the Soviet people reliably to safeguard the security of their country, of the socialist community and all other peace-loving peoples. The USSR has everything it needs for its own defence, and also for the defence of its allies and friends from the US nuclear threat.

At the same time the USSR draws the attention of the Arabs, above all, of those Arab regimes which Washington is eager to involve in an anti-Soviet "strategic accord", to the fact that the USA's military and political moves in the Mediterranean and in the Middle East are intended not only to politically and economically enslave the Arab countries, but also to turn them into bases from which Soviet interests and security could be threatened. Were the

United States to deploy nuclear missiles and other weapons in the Middle East, the Arab countries would become its nuclear hostages.

The Soviet Union firmly adheres to its immutable stand in defence of Syria, the main country in the Middle East that courageously opposes the imperialist-Zionist strategic alliance. It is unlawful to try to equate the Israeli invaders positioned only 25 kilometres away from Damascus and the Syrian military contingent stationed in Lebanon in keeping with a decision by the League of Arab States. Syria has repeatedly reaffirmed its readiness to begin talks with the Lebanese government on winding up the mission of its troops, but only "in the light of Israel's withdrawal from Lebanon", as laid down in the decision of the 12th Meeting of Arab heads of state and government at Fez in 1982. Now that the "multinational force" has displayed its interventionist character Syria has justly made the withdrawal of its troops conditional on the withdrawal from Lebanon of both the Israeli invaders and the "multinational force".

The Soviet Union is in favour of the restoration of Lebanon's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and also an inner-Lebanese settlement on the basis of national agreement. The Israeli occupation forces must get out of Lebanon in keeping with UN Security Council Resolutions 508 and 509. This would mean the annulment of the enslaving Lebanese-Israeli agreement of May 17, 1983, and be in conformity with the decisions of the first round of the Geneva conference on national reconciliation in Lebanon.

The USA and Israel do not want a fair settlement in Lebanon, because it would compel the Israeli invaders to leave the Lebanese territory and would foil Washington's hegemonist plans. The fact that US forces have taken direct combat action in Lebanon wholly exposes Reagan's hypocritical talk about human rights, "freedom and democracy" for the developing countries. If the USA were really concerned about democracy, it would let the Lebanese resolve their internal problems as they see fit. But the US military contingent as part of the "multinational force" has undertaken aggressive actions backed by the might of the US Sixth Fleet. These actions have exposed its true mission—that of the vanguard of the US rapid deployment force on Lebanese soil.

The Soviet Union stands for the withdrawal of the

“multinational force” from Lebanon, because its direct intervention in Lebanese and other Arab internal affairs threatens the security of Lebanon, Syria and the whole of the region.

Washington and Tel Aviv are building up tensions in Lebanon with still another aim in view: to draw the attention of the world public away from the need to solve the Palestinian problem. The Soviet Union believes that a fair solution of this problem is the key to a settlement in the Middle East. A settlement of this kind will be possible only if the Palestinian people can exercise their inalienable right to form their own independent state under PLO leadership. It goes without saying that consolidation of PLO unity on the basis of opposition to the Camp David agreements and the “Reagan plan” (which is just another Camp David in a new wrapper) is a vital factor of success in the fight for the restoration of the usurped rights of the Palestinian people and for the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East. The Soviet Union has repeatedly proposed that to secure such a peace an international conference on the Middle East should be convened with the participation, on the basis of equality, of all parties involved in the Arab-Israeli conflict, including the USSR, the USA and the sole representative of the Palestinian people—the PLO. The Soviet idea won full support at the recent UN General Assembly Session. The overwhelming majority of UN members voted for the holding of such a meeting. Only the USA, Israel, Canada and Australia voted against it.

The USSR’s firm position of support for the just struggle of the Arabs has won recognition in all Arab countries, regardless of their socio-political orientation. Thus, in an interview to *Al-Madjallah*, a journal published in London, Prince Saud Al-Faisal, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Saudi Arabia, spoke highly of the Soviet Union’s support for the just struggle of the Arabs, and of its efforts to achieve a solution of the Palestinian problem. Abdullah Al-Ahmar, Assistant Secretary-General, Baath Arab Socialist Party of Syria, said that the USSR’s consistent and constructive position was a source of strength for the Arab peoples in their struggle against imperialism, neocolonialism and Zionism. In an interview to *Le Point*, a French weekly, President Hafiz Al-Assad of the Syrian Arab Republic gave an assessment of Soviet-Syrian re-

lations. He noted the USSR's sincere support for and assistance to Syria in its struggle against Israeli aggression, for the liberation of occupied territories and the restoration to Arabs of their rights trampled underfoot.

Arab Unity—an Urgent Need

In an attempt to cancel out the achievements of the national-liberation movements and to turn the Middle East with its vast natural resources into their possessions, the USA and Israel are placing their stakes on splitting the Arab ranks and on stirring up inter-Arab contradictions. They have been drawing the Arabs into separate deals, adding fuel to the fire of the Iraq-Iran war and setting one religious community against another.

In these difficult and dangerous conditions, when the free existence of Arab countries is at stake, their contradictions should recede into the background to give priority to Arab solidarity, which is the main weapon in the fight for Arab national independence. It is obvious that the Zionist aggressor and his overseas ally would not have adopted their present arrogant stand if the Arabs had been united. Imperialist and Zionist intrigues can be successfully resisted only if all the Arab countries, regardless of their state and social systems, concentrate their forces and means, which are very impressive. If the Arabs had spent on rebuffing the Zionists, the common enemy of all Arabs and Muslims, those millions upon millions of dollars that have gone into the senseless war between Iran and Iraq, the Israeli aggressor would have been in a most unenviable position. Furthermore, it is no secret that Arab oil dollars have been used, through US banks, to build up Israel's war potential and that the fuel made from Arab oil is used by Israeli combat aircraft and tanks.

The Arabs, who are fighting for their native land, have shown great courage, heroism and combat skill. Their successes in the 1973 war won general recognition, for they exploded the myth of Israel's invincibility. Even though they lack unity, the Arabs have effectively repulsed those who dared attack their land, independence and lives. For nearly two months the Israeli army, armed to the teeth with the latest weapons, failed to break the resistance of the Palestinians and force its way into West Beirut. The

daring raids of the Lebanese patriots compelled the Israeli invaders to retreat to South Lebanon. But even there they do not feel safe. Syria has shown staunchness in the face of Israeli armed provocations. Recent events have shown that the US Air Force and the *New Jersey*'s super-heavy guns have failed to intimidate the Syrians. Thousands of people in Damascus took part in a mass march of protest against imperialist pressure on their country, held after an appeal by the ruling Baath Party, the Syrian Communist Party and other political parties and organisations affiliated to the National Progressive Front. Addressing the marchers on behalf of the country's leadership, Zuhayr Masariqah, Assistant Secretary-General of the Baath Arab Socialist Party, said that the Syrian people and their armed forces were prepared to defend the territory, freedom and independence of their republic to the last. In its appeal to the progressive parties and organisations of the world, the National Progressive Front of Syria says that the Syrian people are determined to defend the lawful interests and aspirations of their Arab nation. They are aware that they are backed by the "forces of peace, freedom and national liberation headed by the Soviet Union—devoted friend of the Arabs."

US imperialism lives in mortal fear of the restoration of Arab unity. It is worth noting that the more far-sighted US politicians have rebuked Reagan for escalating military operations against Syria. They have openly voiced fear that the US air and naval artillery raids on Syrian positions will cause the other Arab countries to rally round Damascus and put Washington's friends among the Arabs in an awkward position.

The movement for anti-imperialist Arab solidarity is led by the progressive regimes and parties in the Arab East. They have called upon the Arab states who continue to rely on the USA to revise their present orientation. Far from giving the Arabs anything, this reliance on Washington has further aggravated the crisis in the Middle East and has resulted in the rejection of the lawful demands of the Arab countries. Today, they say, as never before, they are faced with the choice: either the Arabs will defend their national interests, dignity and honour, or the Middle East will fall victim of the new US-Israeli alliance. The time has come when the Arabs should discard all illusions about the false assurances of the US Administration which

claims that it is eager to achieve a fair solution of the Middle East problem. They should above all see through the notorious "Reagan plan". Those who hope that the national rights of the Palestinians will be realised with the help of US solutions are making a gross mistake. It is time everybody saw that the Reagan Administration is ready to join its strategic partner—Israel—in a real war against the Arabs to bring them under imperialist and Zionist domination on the pretext of defending US "vital interests" and providing "living space" for Israel.

Arab patriots, regardless of their political views, are actively working to cement Arab solidarity. Muhammad Ismail Fahmi, ex-Deputy Premier and Minister of Foreign affairs of Egypt, an eminent political leader, has called upon the Arabs to rally their ranks. In an interview to the newspaper *Al Shaab* he exposed the attempts to deepen the rift in the Arab world by brandishing the bogey of a "Soviet threat". Muhammad Ismail Fahmi ridiculed the assertions of Washington and Tel Aviv about a "Soviet threat" to the Middle East. He pointed out that this threat was nothing but a myth, whereas Israeli aggression against Arab countries was an indisputable fact.

He urged that Arab solidarity be restored in the face of the US-Israeli plans. The cause of the split in the Arab world, he said, was the visit of the former President Sadat to Jerusalem and the Camp David agreements with the separate "peace" treaty with Israel that followed it. As a result, Egypt was isolated from the rest of the Arab world, whereas Israel was given a free hand to launch aggression against other Arab countries. It was no accident that Tel Aviv began to display a far more aggressive spirit immediately after the Camp David documents were signed. Muhammad Ismail Fahmi demanded that the Egyptian government should forthwith announce its refusal to grant the United States military bases and "privileges" in Egyptian territory, and refuse to participate in joint manoeuvres with US forces or in any form of military co-operation with the USA. He added that further Egyptian-US military ties would inevitably result in Egypt becoming an unofficial participant in the anti-Arab US-Israeli agreement.

He spoke in favour of the early normalisation of Egyptian-Soviet relations in all spheres and said that it was the Soviet Union that had built an industrial base for

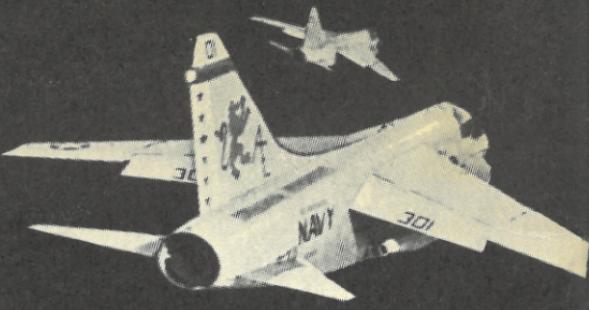
Egypt and supplied it with the necessary weapons. It was with these weapons that the Egyptian army had struck its first victorious blow at the Israeli aggressor in 1973.

In a statement circulated in Tunis Chedli Klibi, Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, pointed out that the Arab peoples were living through a difficult and critical period. Tel Aviv's aggressive policies and unlimited aid to Israel from the imperialist states threatened the national security of the Arab countries and peace in the region and all over the world. Chedli Klibi called on the Arab countries to settle their differences and mobilise their forces to beat off Israeli aggression.

The USSR has always regarded Arab unity on an anti-imperialist and anti-Zionist basis as a decisive factor in the struggle for a just settlement of the Middle East crisis. It will be possible to foil the hegemonist and expansionist plans of the Washington-Tel Aviv strategic axis only if Syria, the Lebanese National Patriotic Forces and the Palestinian resistance movement rally their forces, if all Arab countries co-ordinate their actions and cement their alliance with their true and tested friend, the USSR.

Олег Иванович Фомин
ВАШИНГТОН И ТЕЛЬ-АВИВ ПРОТИВ АРАБОВ
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